



The Voice

of the

*Mennonite Brethren
Bible College*

**XIII: 5
SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER
1964**

THE VOICE
of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College

Vol. XIII

September - October, 1964

No. 5

THE VOICE is the publication of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College, published bi-monthly in the interest of sound Christian teaching, and setting forth the doctrinal position of the institution. Printed by The Christian Press Ltd., 159 Henderson Hwy., Winnipeg. Subscription price: \$1.00 per year. Send your subscription to:

THE VOICE, 77 Henderson Hwy., Winnipeg 5, Man.

Editor: DAVID EWERT

No Articles May be Re-printed Without Permission.

Authorized as second class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|------|
| EDITORIAL | |
| REVELATION — ENCOUNTER AND TRUTH — V. Adrian | 1 |
| ARTICLES | |
| DO WE CREATE AN ELITE AMONG OUR MINISTERS — J. H. Quiring | 5 |
| ORIGIN AND ESCHATOLOGY IN HINDU THOUGHT — F. C. Peters | 6 |
| THE SIN OF THANKSGIVING — Elmer F. Suderman | 9 |
| CONCERNING THE CHRISTIAN AND THE FINE ARTS — Peter Klassen | 12 |
| A SERMON | |
| DIE HERRSCHAFT CHRISTI IM PERÖNLICHEN LEBEN — J. A. Toews | 16 |
| BOOK REVIEW | |
| A LAYMAN'S GUIDE TO PROTESTANT THEOLOGY, by William Horden — H. H. Voth | 20 |
| GESCHICHTE DER EVANGELISCHEN WELT- MISSION, von Horst Flachsmeier — J. J. Toews | 22 |
| ALAN PATON'S CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY: An Appreciation — H. Giesbrecht | 24 |

EDITORIAL

Revelation — Encounter and Truth

It is the experience of all who have sought to witness to Jesus Christ as Redeemer and Lord that the question of authority ultimately is a very significant factor. Is there an objective authority available to man, whereby he is rightly directed in his life and faith, and which forms the criterion by which he can test his views, his commitment and his spiritual experiences? Today, as always, there are many voices which claim to speak with Divine authority. In the early life of the Christian church, under the pressure of human speculations, errors of thought and practice, and heresies, the writings of the apostles and those closely associated with them where collected to form the canon of Scripture — the rule of faith and life for the believers. The pattern of authority did not always rest with Scriptures; during the Middle Ages the traditions of the church were also clothed with authority. With the advent of the Reformation Martin Luther gave expression to a principle which well represents the other reformers, when he declared at a crucial moment: "My conscience is captive to the Word of God!"

In the modern theological discussion the question of religious authority is central; it is one of the most fundamental problems faced by the church. G. C. Berkouwer comments on the present situation with the words: "The great question behind most other questions involving church and theology is the question of certainty. But we want a certainty that is unafraid, that wears no theological blinders."¹ When E. J. Carnell presented the case for orthodox theology in a recent publication, he initiated his argument by a definition of orthodoxy in terms of its authority: orthodoxy is defined as "that branch of Christendom which limits the ground of religious authority to the Bible."²

To speak of the authority of the Bible in the modern discussion is to speak in terms which are subject to divergent interpretations. Involved in the question of authority of the Bible are other concepts such as revelation, inspiration and illumination. In this article we are concerned with the biblical concept of revelation.

The Traditional View of Revelation is being Challenged

Divine revelation is the basis of our Christian faith; Christianity stands or falls with the reality of revelation. If God is our ultimate authority, then that authority must be expressed through a revelation of himself. It is within this realm, of God's self-revelation, that much controversy has arisen and different theological schools of thought have been formed. It is asked whether God's self-revelation is to be understood in terms of event, action, encounter, or a person, or whether it is also to be understood as comprising interpretation, truth, knowledge, propositions. A great deal of modern theology depreciates **revelation as knowledge**; that which is emphasized is **revelation as an experience or an encounter with the living God in Christ Jesus, through the Spirit**. Such a revela-

tion, it is maintained, demands decision and obedience. Usually this view of revelation is set up in antithesis to the traditional and 'fundamentalistic' view of revelation, which to most modern theologians, is a view excessively propositional in emphasis. It is a view which requires of the recipient largely an intellectual assent, which does not deeply touch his life by a radical transformation and by obedience; it is altogether too divorced from a living relationship to Christ; it suggests too much an intellectual conception of God without an existential relationship. Consequently there has been a radical shift in the modern definition of revelation.

John Baillie, in **The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought**, attempts to trace the change of the concept of revelation from the traditional formulation. Traditionally, he maintains, the church identified revelation with the Holy Scriptures; revelation was defined as a communication of a body of knowledge (p. 5). Although the reformers were not quite as rigid as their predecessors, the scholastics, or their successors, theologians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, their concept of revelation was also basically construed in terms of a communication of truths — the truths of Scriptures.

The modern views, which repudiated the traditional view, are traced through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Schleiermacher, the Father of Liberalism, rejected the view that authoritative communicated truths came by revelation, and constructed a theology based upon feeling, the consciousness of complete dependence on God. William Temple defined revelation in terms of the living God, not truths concerning God. Wilhelm Herrmann held to a similar view by maintaining that 'God' is the content of revelation (p. 33). In the twentieth century, Baillie writes that there is remarkable agreement in the discussions on revelation on the point that, "what is fundamentally revealed is God himself, not propositions about God" (p. 49). Revelation is God in action, in events, supremely the event of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Wherever men respond in obedience to Christ, there revelation occurs. Baillie crystallizes the discussion on this point with the words: "...all revelation is given, not in the form of directly communicated knowledge, but through events occurring in the historical experience of mankind, events which are apprehended by faith as 'mighty acts' of God, and which therefore engender in the mind of man such reflective knowledge as is given him to possess" (p. 62).

The Bible is, therefore, the product of human reflection aided by Divine illumination on the revelatory act of God. The Bible is not identified as revelation, but as a witness to revelation, or that which mediates revelation. Revelation is defined more in terms of a Divine-human encounter.³

Revelation — Both Encounter and Truth

The concept of revelation in Scripture is so rich in its content that one can not restrict its meaning either to God's redemptive events and acts, or to propositions and interpretation. If we take,

for example, God's revelation in Jesus Christ, we have more than a mute appearance. In Christ God made himself known by **appearance and word**, by **act and interpretation**; both word and interpretation involve knowledge and truth. As the Son of God, Jesus claimed to have a unique relationship with the Father, which involved a mutual comprehensive, and exclusive knowledge of each other. The Son alone knew the Father and would reveal him to whom he willed: "No one knoweth the son save the Father, neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him" (Matt. 11:27).

It is true that the modality of self-revelation in the act of incarnation was a condensing accommodation to the needs of man in a particular society, at a particular time and place; it was a 'cosmic-mediated' revelation. Christ took on humanity; his speech was the speech of his day. However when he spoke, God spoke; and what was spoken is rightly called revelation. God's revelation in Christ was indeed also conceptual — something was said by Christ: "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son" (Heb. 1:1-2).

Supremely Christ revealed the Father to us by the redemptive event in his death on the cross, by the resurrection and ascension. He revealed himself to us by Christ's life, his character, his person; but the person of Christ and the redemptive events are not separated from the interpretation and message of Christ. Knowing God, as that which is life eternal, is not mere theological intellectualism, not merely a propositional knowledge of God's nature and attributes, or a knowledge of his acts in history; knowing God means to know him experientially — there is a dynamic aspect, a spiritual encounter. But it also includes a conceptual knowledge of God which came through revelation. The relationship of these two aspects is well summarized by Ramm: "The knowing of God as a profound spiritual experience involves a saying from God, just as a saying from God intends a knowing of God."⁴

The Old Testament points in the same direction. The primary concept of revelation is that of God's gracious acts of self-disclosure to men, whereby he sought to draw them into his fellowship and service.⁵ God's actions are particularly evident during the exodus and the exile. However these acts of God were wedded to the revelatory word.⁶ An examination of the words of the prophets and their understanding of their function as servants of God would indicate such a relationship. The revelation of God to the prophets involved a dynamic relationship; revelation is associated with personal relationship. The prophets were holy men of God, committed to Him in obedience and service. They were men who masticated the word of God (Ezekiel 3), and who felt the fire in their bones (Jer. 20). As mediators of the revelatory word they were very much involved in an experiential relationship with God. They were spiritual men, who spoke by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 2:21). Although they were men, they identify their words with God's word revealed to them. They decry the false prophets who spoke

out of their minds and hearts without a vision from God (Jer. 23:16). The true prophets, on the other hand, were able to give an authentic interpretation of God's actions in history because God had revealed it unto them. Apart from such a revelation, involving objective knowledge, the events would have remained enigmas. The prophets witness that they were conscious of being instruments in God's service, called to be authoritative speakers for him as his mouthpiece. They regarded their message as God's message, their words as God's words, which were to be prefaced by the strong term, "Thus saith the Lord."

It is the consistent testimony of the Bible that man can know God because God has revealed himself. This knowledge of God is dynamic; it involves being a recipient of his grace in Christ; it involves therefore encounter, obedience and commitment. We ought not to speak of God's revelation to us in terms which do not include the experiential; at the same time we must also accept the biblical account which indicates that revelation includes a communication of knowledge and truth. These two aspects are correlative. The revelation of God as a communication of words is intended to direct us in our experiential relationship to our Lord, to enrich our understanding of him, to deepen our devotion and commitment to him, to help us understand what our task is in the world in which we live. This leads not to meaninglessness and futility in this life, but to a meaningful life, hope, faith and love.

1. "Current Religious Thought", *Christianity Today*, August 2, 1963.
2. *The Case For Orthodox Theology*, p. 12.
3. Cf. C. Bauman, *Mennonite Life*, Vol. XIX, April, 1964, p. 55.
4. B. Ramm, *Special Revelation and the Word of God*, p. 149.
5. J. G. S. Thomson, *The Old Testament View of Revelation*, p. 9.
6. *Ibid.* p. 13.

— V. Adrian

(Conclusion of article from page 24) reformers trusting in the fundamental goodness of human nature alone."¹ Not every reader will accept Paton's answer to the problem, but readers will find it difficult to deny the fact that his **formulation** of the answer is a full and probing one that reaches to the innermost sources of human motive and action. And they will be obliged to confess that the pervasive **tone** in which Paton offers his answer to the problem is one of utter sincerity and profound urgency. It

is this overwhelming conviction and passion of the author — always a rare commodity — about both the tragic proportions of the problem and about the tremendous possibilities of the Christian solution suggested, that probably accounts best for the increasing significance of his novel in our time.

1. Horton Davis: *Mirror of the Ministry in Modern Novels*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1959).

Herbert Giesbrecht

ARTICLES

Do We Create An Elite Among Our Ministers

This question is of concern to more ministers than the one who had the courage to ask it. Some ministers feel slighted, ignored and consequently, discouraged while they observe others riding the crest of a wave of popularity which may also soon subside.

There always will be the Peters and Pauls, the Andrews and the Matthews. Individual differences cannot be erased and should be accepted gracefully. For some of these differences we are not to be held responsible; others we have helped to create.

God, according to his sovereign will and wisdom, has made distribution of natural and spiritual gifts. To each he has divided a special portion. To some he has given more; to others less. In this matter he has left us no choice and also no reason to complain. We can only accept these gifts for ourselves and acknowledge them in others.

Providential circumstances beyond our control have measured to each one a limited degree of opportunity for individual development and growth. For some these opportunities were more favorable than for others. These are facts we must face and learn to live with, rather than to make them the excuse for any lack of progress in our lives.

Although someone will find a great deal of comfort in assigning responsibility to God for the distribution of gifts and the providential ordering of circumstances, there are some very evident differences which we have helped to create. It cannot be denied that some of these differences are due to plain hard work. Some just work harder than others. Public approval and social standing are ordinarily not given by lot but by evaluation of services rendered. This evaluation may not be based on the same standards nor made by equally competent judges. It is hoped, however, that a pooling of these value judgments will average into a fairly accurate evaluation that will find wide acceptance. Those who labor hard and persistently could well expect to rise to a level of public recognition which others, though equally capable but not equally ambitious, may not attain.

An equality of ability and opportunity for all is unthinkable. God has made provision for a variety of gifts given in unequal portions. Free enterprise will naturally tend to increase and augment these differences, rather than to reduce or eliminate them.

Although it may seem that these differences have set the stage for nurturing jealousy and developing rivalries among the servants of God, this was not God's intent. The varied needs on different levels of society require a diversification of abilities and functions in the ranks of the preachers. What appears to hurt is not so much the more modest equipment for service or the occupation of a lesser place but the apparently insufficient appreciation result-

ing in a decreased demand for our services. The smaller wheel might well be quite content as long as it is well lubricated and allowed to turn.

The increased demands for top quality service made upon our ministers in our present age has decreased the number of contestants and made competition more keen. It is possibly not so much the competition between ministers as between churches and organizations to obtain the services of those apparently best qualified that gives rest to uneasy feelings. What appears to irk some brethren is to see some or few fellow ministers in constant demand, being called to serve as pastor of several churches, to be voted into a number of standing committees, to be chosen repeatedly as speaker of a number of special occasions, and to find themselves ignored and, shall we say, unwanted.

It is not that anyone has intentionally created a ministerial society of socially superior to which individuals are admitted upon application and presentation of a unique record of achievement. If there is an "elite" of ministers within our brotherhood it has been unconsciously created by a public that is not in the race for membership, but that wants to be served well and is willing to give unqualified recognition to those who meet their needs. Now it is very wholesome that not all have identical needs, desires and tastes. Consequently, there is a fairly equitable sharing of criticism as well as approval. We may well question whether leveling in this area is always desirable. The records show that leveling is usually downward. Is this what we want? We need strong leadership that can be trusted and that will be encouraged to lead. To rise to the top may be a cherished ambition but the realization of this ambition often places people on a precarious perch from which they can readily be dislodged by a concerted effort of jealous and injured rivals.

In order to reduce ill feeling and hard feelings residing in the hearts of ministers, though often camouflaged, it does not become necessary to haul some people down but rather to raise others up. At a time when the need for more workers is increasing it becomes essential that we keep alive the radiant witness of our brethren whose scope of service has become restricted as a result of a combination of factors that operate in our society.

J. H. Quiring

Origin and Eschatology in Hindu Thought

The people now known as Hindus are not ethnologically homogeneous. Most of the Hindus have very little in common except the name. As one writer says, even the name, "Hindu", is of foreign origin. There seems to be no common word of indigenous origin which is applicable to all the Hindus. The word "Aryan" was applied to the three higher castes, but the fourth and the fifth castes, who form the majority of the Hindus, used to be known by their caste or sub-caste names.

The Hindus consist mainly of the aborigines of India and the various races that invaded and settled down in the country up to the time of the Muslim conquest. The Hindus and their religion are the result of many racial migrations and fusions.

It goes without saying that the Aryans have made the greatest impact on Indian culture. Even after the Aryans were conquered by tribes from Central Asia their traditions remained firm and were taken over by the conquerors. Until recently scholars accepted Aryan interpretations which claimed that the Indians were totally ignorant prior to the Aryan invasion. Today excavators have established that the Aryans conquered a civilized people with a tradition. The city of Mohan-jo-daro which has been unearthed reveals a well laid out plan with a main street about 33 ft. wide. The city also had a spacious bath with an elaborate drainage system. The homes appear to have been equipped with private bathrooms. All this dating back to about 3000 B.C.

The Aryans were racial fanatics but were most tolerant in religious matters. They accepted the religious traditions of the peoples whom they conquered and integrated them into their loose religious system. When the Aryans saw that intermarriage threatened their racial purity they introduced the caste system, the most rigorous social code in the world. When new people threatened Aryan purity they were isolated into a caste.

In religious matters a more lenient course was followed. People were allowed to worship any gods they pleased and hold any views they liked as long as these did not seriously challenge the fundamental principles of social organization. These tendencies gave rise to a strange paradox in Hinduism: social rigidity and religious elasticity. A Hindu may take many religious liberties but social codes in such matters as inter-dining and inter-marrying are not transgressed.

This tolerance in religious matters has preserved some very ancient religious traditions concerning origins and eschatology. Hindus believe that they are of divine origin. They claim to descend from the person of Brahma. Various castes have sprung from the different parts of Brahma's body. The priestly caste (Brahmins) claim to come from the head of Brahma. The warriors (Kshatriyas) come from the arms and the traders and farmers from the thighs. The menial caste come from the feet, The other races of men are believed to have sprung from the darkness which Brahma did not use and "cast away."

Since Hinduism is most syncretistic there are somewhat conflicting theories of origin or creation. One ancient sage, Manu, claims that he created mankind but not the universe. While he recognizes Brahma and calls him father, he reserves the honour of creating mankind for himself.

Before creating man the earth was enveloped in darkness. It was unknowable as if it were sunk in a sleep. The self-existent "Lord" caused the earth to become discernible. He desired to produce various creatures from his own body. First he created the waters and deposited a seed into them. The seed became a golden

egg in which he, the deity, was born as Brahma. After he had remained in the egg for one year, he divided it by his mere thought. From the two shells he formed the heaven and the earth with the sky in the middle.

The interesting aspect of this search for a theory of creation is that each writer on the subject has a different theory. Each account differs substantially from those of other writers. All accounts are held to be equally sacred and by a strange system of Hindu logic are equally true.

The Hindus do not believe in an absolute beginning. Creation is an endless process. It is possible to speak of the creation of a particular universe. Our present universe has a beginning and will have an end. But another universe will follow and so the cycle goes on endlessly.

The Hindu conception of the universe is cyclical. An ingenious mathematical table has been evolved to measure these great cycles of time. One complete cycle is the Kalpa or the Day of Brahma. It is equivalent to more than four billions of our years. The Kalpa is divided into 1,000 mahayugas of equal length. Each mahayuga is again divided into four Yugas or ages.

It is of interest to note that the Hindu has something which resembles a fall. In the first Yuga (Kritayuga) only good prevails, evil is entirely absent from the world. All men are equal and good. In the second age (Tretayuga) evil suddenly appears. In the third age (Dwaparayuga) an intense struggle ensues between good and evil. In the final age (Kaliyuga) evil triumphs. It is an age of strife, sweat and toil. The end of the last age comes by a deluge or by fire. Hindus are now living in the last age.

But his final destruction by fire is not really the end. It simply ends one Kalpa or one Day of Brahma. Brahma is not immortal but is destined himself to die. On the completion of his term of life, Brahma dies and the universe is engulfed in what is called mahapadaya, The Great Chaos, which destroys all, demons and humans. After one hundred years of Chaos another Brahma is born and the cycle is thus continued without end.

Against this background we can better understand Paul's dynamic message concerning the blessed hope of the Christian. The heathen are without hope because they are without a glorious final end in Christ. Christ has become the great Rosetta Stone by which all the mysteries of origin and end are solved. "By him were all things made." His glorious appearing will consummate time and usher in eternity where "God will be all in all."

It is also against this background that one senses the real issues in eschatology. After viewing the discouraging strife over eschatological minutiae it comes as a real breath of fresh air to feel the central thrust of the Christian doctrine of end. Somehow the battlefield has a center once more and the peripheral skirmishes are suddenly of much lesser importance. Christ is the victor and the Kingdom of God triumphs once and for all. Truly, the Alpha and Omega suddenly become visible.

F. C. Peters

The Sin of Thanksgiving

THANKSGIVING IN AMERICA this year ought to be, if we believe the gospel of the advertisers, a flavorful and luxurious affair. There will be no dearth of succulent foods, aromatic smells, or downy resting places for which the American can sing a hymn of praise.

On Thanksgiving morning he can be grateful for the ultimate in sleeping comfort, his plump and buoyant, imported, non-allergic, European goose down pillow. He can give thanks for a restful night of sleep induced by his luxurious blankets which make him feel that he owns his own forest of murmuring pines—and by his harmless, nonhabitforming sleeping pills, which he has taken every night for the last five years. While he is doing his heavy intellectual work for the day — reading the funny paper and the sports page — he gratefully rests in his king-sized swivel rocker, drinking his morning cup of aromatic coffee with its robust flavor and smoking a cigarette, big, smooth, and satisfying, and tasting not good, but good, good, good.

As he looks up at his wife, he is grateful she uses the soap which completely removes any blemishes and which washes the natural beauty back into her complexion. His wife does not know, he acknowledges with gratitude, the poisonous feeling — "doubt of self" — that has a sad way of smothering the loveliness of countless women because she has used the cold cream — I won't tell you which one — that unlocks "a power within her which springs from the working together of her outer self and inner self, a power which sets her face sparkling with happy confidence because she knows that she is charming to look at."

He is happy, too, that his wife will not lose her vibrant appearance cooking a bit of heaven for the Thanksgiving dinner. The sleek, modern equipment of his kitchen where the burner with a brain won't let the food burn and where cooler, cleaner cooking than ever before will allow his wife to complete the meal with cool aplomb. He may even reflect, with gratitude of course, that "a spouse around the house saves the gent many a cent."

When they do sit down to eat, he is pleased to use his sensitively balanced, hard-finished sterling silver and to eat from his exceptionally sturdy, beautiful spode — which he did not wait to inherit — on a table covered with an exotic linen imported from Ireland. The food, of course, is more than delicious; it is fabulous, exciting, elegant. He can be thankful that the holiday turkey on his table has been selected from the finest flocks in the land and that it is plump, broad-breasted and heavy with juicy, tender meat. The mashed potatoes are gee-whiz good and the pumpkin pie, well, the pumpkin pie is the last word in festive elegance. It is luscious pumpkin chiffon pie that is golden, creamy, smooth, and light—light—light and made especially for fastidious people who are fussy about foods.

And he is thankful as he sits down to his abundance that he can eat heartily, even though he is overweight and subject to acid indigestion. He can always go on a diet — tomorrow — perhaps using the new concept of weight control, the readymix liquids in which calories are limited to 900 a day. Perhaps if he waits long enough they will find a way of diet without cutting calories. As for the upset stomach he can take “stomach sweeteners,” or if his stomach acts up too much he can get one of those one-shot nostrums that not only cure acid indigestion but sour stomach, heartburn, gas pain and nervous stomach all at one time and in only seconds.

He has so much to be grateful for, the American thinks, as he sips his after dinner liquor, luxuriating in its superb flavor and matchless aroma. He has the enchantment of a new car which is an open sesame to a fascinating world filled with exciting experiences. He can drive his car with its hum-free, thumpfree tires over super highways where 66,000 other cars travel every day. He can buy suits that are iridescent and wear shoes that are air-cushioned and give him the feeling of walking on pillows. He has a good job and is soon to be promoted. He is building an adequate retirement policy and his investments are sound. He has, indeed, he ruminates, great reasons to be thankful for his fluffy, creamy world where the lumps and bumps have even been taken out of the sugar.

He is moreover, a respectable person, a man of rectitude and good standing in his community. He has always been careful not to ignore the common standards of decency. And though he rarely goes to church, he believes in faith and in God — as a benevolent and easy-going father who will surely deal lightly with his infrequent lapses from common sense and who will give him what he needs to continue his decent and happy life.

Harder Butter on Softer Bread

Of course, this is an overdrawn picture of the American at Thanksgiving. There are still many of us who will find ourselves in the predicament of the man who in speaking to his investment counselor said, “I have a problem. I have no money to invest.” Yet, surely, overdrawn as the picture is, it does, I think, show us that we can sin even in our thanksgiving. And many of us will be guilty this Thanksgiving of the sin of being grateful for the wrong things. As long as our great goal in life is to get harder and harder butter on softer and softer bread, we will give thanks for the deep freeze and the refining processes of the flour mills. As long as our great goal is to achieve air-puffed softness in our life, we will be thankful for four walls with a plush carpet, a fireside, a cozy corner, a recliner chair, a pair of slippers, a pipe, and something to drink. As long as our goal in life is to be personable and successful, we will be thankful for the toothpaste that keeps our teeth in shining order and our breath sweet, for the shampoo that keeps our hair beautiful, for the clothes that keeps us immaculately groomed, for the soft drink that brings out the best in people.

As long as our great goal in life is to make more profits, we will give thanks even for the evils of the profit system, forgetting that we also ought to be thankful for the prophets who speak a word of judgment on our often exclusively selfish and material concerns. As long as our great concern in life is to gain peace of mind, we will be grateful for those who in the name of religion give us mental sedatives to ease us to sleep at night and tonics to stiffen our backs in the morning, but who do not call us to repentance for our pride and depravity.

On Thanksgiving, 1963, it will be easy for us to forget that God has not often called the rich, the wise, the mighty, the noble, that God has not often had His dealings with men by the fireside but on windswept deserts where the bush burns. That God often speaks to men whose teeth are not brushed, whose hair is not combed, and who might quite likely have b.o. and halitosis. Indeed He has often spoken to the most unprepossessing of men who know nothing of elegance, who know nothing of making friends and influencing people. It is on a stony pillow, not on a super-cushioned one, where men have most often dreamed of the ladder of communication between earth and heaven.

It will be easy for us to forget that God speaks to those who are troubled in mind more often than to those who have peace of mind. Not when life is comfortable but when it is challenging has God come to men. Perhaps this Thanksgiving we should pray, as George Whitefield did, “When Thou seest me in danger of nestling — in pity — in tender pity — put a thorn in my nest to prevent me from it.” And perhaps we should include in our thanksgiving prayer a word of thanks for our thorns.

Forgetfulness and Pride

The sinfulness of our thanksgiving becomes apparent in the second place when we consider that often our thanksgiving is such that it keeps us from remembering the two out of three people in the world who go to bed hungry every night. In our gratefulness for the traditional American table, we so easily forget the children, chalk-faced and hunger-thin, over whom the hawk of death rides high on every wind.

Staff Sergeant Irving Feirstein, writing in *The New Republic* in 1945, tells how once at lunch United States soldiers entered a fenced in area where they ate while hungry, barefoot, dirty mothers with their bawling, emaciated children watched with glued eyes, begging hands, and open mouths every spoonful travel from plate to mouth.

“You turned away,” Feirstein wrote, “trying to hide your sandwich from those awful eyes and those old faces on small bodies. You’d rather not see it.”

A lot of people are like that. If they don’t see it, they don’t know about it, and if they don’t know about it, it’s not their fault, is it?

Will we not this Thanksgiving turn our eyes away from the hunger of the world so that we can enjoy the munificence of God

undisturbed by the thought of other people's hunger? Will we be willing even to share the five dollars which it takes to give bread to 4,500 persons, the ten dollars which would give bowls of cereal to 30,000 children, or even the three cents it costs for one meal for the hungry?

Finally we sin in our thanksgiving because we are guilty of the greatest sin of all, the sin of pride. It will be very easy for us to think that we have only ourselves to thank for our creature comforts. Somehow we feel that we deserve all these things or that God gives them to us because of our good behavior, and we pray, though perhaps not as openly as the Pharisee: "O God, I thank thee that I am not like the rest of mankind, greedy, dishonest, impure, or even like that tax collector over there."

And then like most of us, the Pharisee enumerated his own virtues. But the better stance of man before God even today — perhaps more than ever today — in our comfortable, secure, self-righteous age — is the stance of the tax collector who stood in a distant corner, scarcely daring to look up to heaven, and with a gesture of despair said "God have mercy on a sinner like me."

This surely is the beginning of true thanksgiving.

— Elmer F. Sudermann

(Reprinted with kind permission from *The Mennonite* nov. 26., 1963; organ of the General Conference of Mennonites, published at Newton, Kansas, editor: Maynard Shelly.)

Concerning the Christian and the Fine Arts

The New Testament states that the church of Christ is a body of believers, and that this body has many different members, each one of which performs special and different functions. In this day and age there functions may be quite varied, so that people with specialized training find it increasingly easy to put their talents to use in building the kingdom of God. In this witness the medium of the fine arts is being utilized more and more: Christians are performing vital roles as members of the body of Christ in such areas as architecture, writing (literature), painting, sculpture, music.

We agree that Jesus did not send His disciples into the world to teach the people the fine arts. But have you ever stopped to consider to what an extent the fine arts have in fact made you what you are? Where, for example, did you get the ideas you carry around in your head? You admit that you got them from your parents, friends, teachers, preachers, from books and articles, and from observing life as it went on about you.

In the end we have to admit that most of our ideas (even our very best ones) come from other people. People share with each other those thoughts and experiences that they find significant, and the most significant thoughts tend to survive as the fittest, especially when they are suitably expressed in some form or other. These hardy, worthwhile ideas then incubate wherever they are allowed

to take root, and may become a part of the warp and woof of society as such. Thus it is possible to say that all Mennonites think alike (up to a point), or that all Scotsmen are of one mind, because of the sharing of ideas.

Solomon said that in his day there was no end to the making of books. I wonder what he would say about the publishing trade today! There is far too much for us to read, hence only those books that make significant contributions to life and thought continue to be read by succeeding generations. When we speak of acquiring an education we are merely saying that we want to become acquainted with that which has been found significant in the past — the best that has been thought and said — whether this may mean a mathematical formula, a design for a basilica, an exposition of a passage in the Scriptures, or a detailed account of the rise and fall of the Third Reich. And we want the process of acquiring this education to be a reasonably pleasant one. In the area of the fine arts we shall want to become familiar with man's finest achievements since these help to satisfy his aesthetic needs and artistic inclinations.

I don't think we need argue the point that man has aesthetic needs — it is rather a matter of degree. All people are artists up to a point — we all respond to artistic phenomena in varying degrees. For example, a beautiful rock garden or a lovely rose affect all of us agreeably (unless we are allergic to roses), yet not all of us will become landscape architects or gardeners because of this. The fact that you are especially moved by the fit use of words — the apt expression of great thoughts — may not mean that you will become a writer or a poet.

Don't run away from the fine arts. Don't be afraid to admit that the works of art have power to move you, perhaps even very deeply. God has made us as He has, fine arts and all, that we might live life more abundantly. God Himself made this world supremely beautiful and did not hesitate to declare that it was all "very good." It should be obvious to anyone that God is lavish in His use of the fine arts as evidenced in His created works all around us. It would be an understatement to call God the greatest artist of all time.

However, we must admit that all the latent propensities for good that were in man suffered a decline after the Fall. The Christian who studies worldly wisdom must keep this in mind and be on his guard when the natural man makes statements that are at variance with revealed truth. It is through the medium of the fine arts that much of this "worldly" wisdom is communicated. It thus behooves us to be thoroughly conversant with the fine arts because our lives are embedded in a culture that has evolved in a large measure from them. Our standards of taste or excellence are formed to a large extent by secular works of merit. The purely literary qualities of Shakespeare or the Bible, for example, are judged by the same standards that govern good writing at any time. A painting of a castle or a painting of Christ are judged in the same way. Our concepts of beauty will determine the kinds of clothes we buy,

the songs we sing, the kinds of churches we wish to build to worship in, the kinds of books we buy for extra-curricular reading

But more specifically, how does a Christian make use of the fine arts in his witnessing — or to put it another way, what makes a work of art “Christian”? It would seem that it is done in the same way that a businessman makes his profession “Christian” because he is a Christian businessman. A medical practice is “Christian” if the doctor is a Christian (though he may prescribe pills that have been made by an atheist). Is a house “Christian” if it was designed by a Christian architect and built by a Christian carpenter, etc etc.? It is only too obvious that this sort of reasoning leads very quickly to inaccuracies and dilemmas.

It is not sufficient that a poem use the name of Christ to make it a religious poem. There were those in Christ’s day who said “Lord, Lord” but Jesus knew them not as genuine followers or true believers. Nor is it sufficient to make a building look like a church to make it a church building in a true sense. The churches that have been built in the past represent the styles that people used at one time, but that alone does not mean that the pattern of church architecture used during the middle ages or during the 19th century are especially “Christian.” To imitate the old models today may mean nothing more than an expression of a certain kind of clerical nostalgia, similar in many respects to the warm feeling around the heart engendered by thoughts of the “little red school-house” that some of us attended in the “good old days.”

It is an easy matter for an architect to design a church that “looks like a church” because all he need do is copy the “looks” of familiar gothic or colonial designs. Many Christians have been led to suppose that the church architectural styles of the past represent eternal forms expressing eternal truths. If this is the case, they will probably find contemporary architectural expression repugnant or meaningless. It is the duty of any church to determine just what in fact it is and what its function is in society, and then plan a suitable building that will serve to fulfil this purpose adequately.

Since the church is already a symbol (a temple of living stones) it need not recall graphically another symbol. Any good architect, whether a Christian or not, will be able to design a church building that would suit the needs of a church today. The advantage in having a Christian architect design a church lies in the fact that he understands more precisely the complex needs of the church in the 20th century. But this does not mean that he will be able to design a better church than the non-Christian architect could, because he may not be as good an architect as he is a Christian. In other words, we must not allow our religious convictions to cloud our common sense or artistic judgments.

People who maintain that the relationship of the Christian to the fine arts is a simple matter are most certainly guilty of oversimplifying the problems involved. It is encouraging to note an expression of concern in the area of church architecture in recent years regarding the need for erecting structures that shall express our Mennonite convictions, our Anabaptist emphases, our

simple way of life, etc. It is important that we should seek to make our religious convictions artistically meaningful, but to achieve this ideal will be no easier than to make a certain work of art “Christian.” Our church buildings today **should** have a new look — the look of a Mennonite church fulfilling its God-given task in the 20th century — not the 19th nor the 16th.

We cannot ignore the fine arts for long. Our problems today do not lie in the areas of making a living nor with similar problems of physical survival. Our main problems today are in the area of faith and culture, the church and the world (or the state). The church cannot content itself with programs, but must seek an increase of the imagination by means of which the Biblical and historic faith may be translated into terms that are meaningful to men today.

A work of art is somewhat similar to revelation in its transmission of meaning. We should not see art primarily as propaganda or as a means of “communication.” A work of art is not merely another means of saying something which may be equally well said in other ways. The **Messiah**, for example, cannot be said equally well in other ways; nor will any volumes of books be able to state what “The Last Supper” says mutely in paint.

I do not wish to imply that our main witness is in the realm of the fine arts. Naturally, the preaching of the gospel, teaching the Word, prayer, practicing fellowship with the saints — are of primary concern. But our total witness ultimately brings into play every aspect of our personalities, every gift that God has given the Church. It is my concern that these other gifts should not be overlooked. Nor should a Christian consider the utilitarian arts such as farming, nursing, banking, photography, making money,, etc. as somehow inferior to the so-called fine arts.

God has created us with instincts that seek to express themselves in the realm of the fine arts as well as in other areas. Let us train ourselves to give apt expression to these divine instincts so that we might bring praise to Him and further the work of the church so that we might convince men of the relevancy of Christianity in our day.

Peter Klassen

Academic Excellence

AS I SEE IT, therefore, some of the manifestations of intellectual excellence in the mature Christian may well be (1) a realistic understanding of responsible behavior rather than the seeking of selfish advantage, (2) an honest recognition of the finiteness and incompleteness of one’s personal knowledge, no matter how keen his intellect, (3) a true sense of fellowship with and concern for others including Christians less well endowed with gifts or meaningful experiences, (4) a perspective which assigns to contemporary culture its proper place as measured by Biblical values, and (5) such a compelling vision of ultimate or eternal goals as to affect vitally decisions regarding commitments of time, energy and opportunity.

Such excellence is not produced automatically. Instead, it is the result of rigorous mental and spiritual exercise calculated to conform us to the image of God’s dear Son. Together let us seek this kind of greatness — which brings me to what is a fitting text for an honors convocation:

Dr. Hudson Armerding, Provost of Wheaton College

A SERMON

Die Herrschaft Jesu Christi im persönlichen Leben

Phil. 2, 9-11.

(Predigt gehalten am Konferenzsonntag in Winkler, Man., 1964)

Einleitung:

Das freudige und zuversichtliche Bekenntnis der ersten Christen lautete: Jesu Christus ist der Herr! Nach dem Bericht des Neuen Testaments beginnt dieses Bekenntnis mit der Auferstehung Jesu, und ist zum großen Teil eine Folge derselben. Diese Tatsache geht klar hervor aus dem triumphierenden Bekenntnis des Apostels Petrus am Pfingstfeste: "So wisse nun das ganze Haus Israel, daß Gott diesen Jesus, den ihr gekreuzigt habe, zu einem Herrn und Christus gemacht hat" (Apg. 2, 36). In der Apostelgeschichte, sowie in den Briefen, ist es der beliebteste Name unseres Erlösers. Mindestens 200 mal wird ihm dieser Name beigelegt. "Es ist der Herr!" genügte, wenn die Jünger ihren Meister bezeichnen wollten (Joh. 21, 7). Alle Heilstiftungen verbanden die ersten Christen mit diesem Titel. Das Mahl der Gemeinschaft nannten sie des Herrn Mahl; den Tag der Anbetung bezeichneten sie als des Herrn Tag; die Gemeinde war für sie der Leib des Herrn. Das ganze Leben versuchten sie unter die Herrschaft Jesu zu bringen.

Das wiederholte Auftauchen dieses Themas auf unsern Konferenzen scheint eine innere Sorge zu offenbaren. Im Jahre 1958 auf der Konferenz in Nord Kildonan lautete das Thema: "Jesus Christus, unser Herr" (Röm. 1, 4b). Auf der Weltkonferenz in Kitchener (1962) lautete das Thema: "Die Herrschaft Christi." Ist diese Beschäftigung mit der Wahrheit ein Zeichen des schwindenden Einflusses der Herrschaft Jesu in unsern Gemeinden?

Eine ernste und sachliche Untersuchung unseres Gemeindelebens läßt keinen Zweifel an der Tatsache, daß manche Mächte um den Herrscherthron im Leben der Gotteskinder ringen. Ein nationalistischer Staat, eine vergnügungssüchtige Welt, eine sekuläre Bildung — alle beeinflussen und bestimmen das Denken und Handeln unserer Gemeindeglieder. Dazu kommt noch die Überbetonung eines demokratischen Gemeindeideals, welches auch die Herrschaft Jesu im Leben der Gläubigen gefährdet (vgl. Laodizea). Für manches Gemeindeglied ist die Stimme des Volkes die Stimme Gottes. Es tut not, daß wir uns als ganze Bruderschaft auf's neue bekennen zu der Herrschaft Jesu, und daß wir durch Predigt und Lehre darnach streben, daß Jesus Christus der Herr sei im Leben jedes einzelnen Gemeindegliedes! Beachten wir zunächst

I. Die geistlichen Grundlagen dieser Herrschaft.

Die Herrschaft Jesu im Leben der Gläubigen ist begründet in zwei heilsgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen.

1. Die Einsetzung Jesu als Herrn — von göttlicher Seite.

Die Einsetzung Jesu als Herrn über alles durch einen besonderen Heilsakt Gottes gehört zum zentralen Zweck der Erlösung. Das geht hervor aus Phil. 2, 9-11, "Darum hat ihn auch Gott erhöht... daß Jesus Christus der Herr sei..." Diese Wahrheit bildet auch den Schlußakkord der Fürbitte Pauli in Eph. 1, 22: "... und hat alle Dinge unter seine Füße getan, und hat ihn gesetzt zum Haupt der Gemeinde über alles..." Durch seine Menschwerdung, durch seine Erniedrigung, und vor allem durch seinen Tod am Kreuze, erwarb Jesus Christus, der Gottmensch, sich die Berechtigung zu dieser Herrschaft. Der Weg zum Herrscherthron — nicht nur im Gottesreich der Vollendung, sondern auch in den Herzen der Gotteskinder von heute — ging durch das Tal der Todesschatten und des Kreuzes. "Denn dazu ist Christus auch gestorben und auferstanden und wieder lebendig geworden, daß er über Tote und Lebendige Herr sei" (Röm. 14, 9).

Für die Herrschaft Gottes über ein gefallenes Menschengeschlecht beginnt ein neuer Tag mit der Auferstehung Jesu. Es ist zu beachten, daß gerade dem Gott-Mensch Jesus die Herrschaft vom Vater übertragen ist. (vgl. Apg. 17, 31). Eine Theologie, die Christi Gottheit leugnet, kann zu keinem richtigen Verständnis seiner Herrschaft kommen. Andererseits ist die Gefahr für Jesu Herrschaft im Leben ebenso groß, wenn man die Menschheit Christi leugnet, und damit eine rechte Jüngerschaft, denn Jüngerschaft bedeutet ein Wandeln in den Fußtapfen des menschgewordenen Gottessohnes. Die andere Voraussetzung der Herrschaft Jesu ist

2. Die Annahme Jesu als Herrn — von menschlicher Seite.

Das Neue Testament verbindet die Herrschaft Jesu unmittelbar mit der Heilserfahrung des Menschen. Jesu Retterschaft und Herrschaft gehören unzertrennlich zusammen in der Bekehrung des Menschen. So lehrt Paulus in Röm. 10, 9: "Denn so du mit deinem Munde bekennst Jesum, daß er der Herr sei, und glaubst in deinem Herzen... so wirst du selig."

In jener denkwürdigen Damaskusstunde beugte sich Saul von Tarsus unter das Szepter des "Jesus von Nazareth" (Apg. 22, 8). Solch eine Heilserfahrung bedeutete für Saulus mehr als nur Vergebung der Sünden, mehr als Befreiung von der Schuld, mehr als Hoffnung des ewigen Lebens — es bedeutete für ihn eine radikale Lebensänderung, eine neue Lebensrichtung. Der Weg unter der Herrschaft Jesu führte nicht zurück zum Hohenpriester nach Jerusalem, sondern vorwärts in die großen Missionsgebiete der Welt.

Die Unterlassung der Betonung dieser Wahrheit auch in unsern Kreisen zeigt sich in einer flachen Heilserfahrung. Ein Glaube ohne Jüngerschaft, eine Erfahrung ohne Lebensänderung, ist klarer

Beweis, daß im Leben kein Regierungswechsel stattgefunden. Jesus kann nur diejenigen retten, die ihn als Herrn annehmen!

Es ist jedoch eine andere große Wahrheit, welche uns durch dieses Thema nahegelegt wird.

II. Der einzigartige Charakter dieser Herrschaft.

Jesus Christus ist der Herr aller Herren, der König aller Könige, und seine königliche Erklärung lautet: "Mir ist gegeben alle Gewalt (Autorität) im Himmel und auf Erden" (Matth. 28, 18)). Einmal ist Jesu Herrschaft

1. Eine absolute Herrschaft.

Das bedeutet, daß keine andere Autorität dieselben Ansprüche an das Leben eines Gotteskindes stellen kann wie Jesus Christus. Jesus ist ganz Herr, oder er ist gar nicht Herr.

Die Autorität des irdischen Vaters ist nie absolut im Leben des Sohnes oder der Tochter. Die Tatsache, daß die Familie zur Schöpfungsordnung Gottes gehört, verpflichtet die Kinder wohl zum Gehorsam gegen die Eltern (vgl. Matth. 15, 4). Dieser Gehorsam ist jedoch beschränkt, und muß im Leben des Jüngers dem Gehorsam gegen Christus unterordnet werden. Der Herr Jesus erklärt sehr bestimmt in Matth. 10, 37: "Wer Vater oder Mutter mehr liebt denn mich, der ist mein nicht wert..." Als Jesus die Söhne des Zebedäus, Jakobus und Johannes, in seine Nachfolge rief, verließen sie ohne Zögern ihr Schiff und ihren Vater, und folgten ihm nach (Matth. 4, 22). Manche Eltern haben ihre Kinder gezwungen, gegen den Willen Gottes zu handeln, in dem sie deren Weg durch ihre Autorität bestimmten.

Die Autorität eines irdischen Staates darf auch nie als absolut gelten im Leben eines Christen. Der Staat gehört nicht zur Schöpfungsordnung Gottes, wie einige lutherische Theologen behaupten, sondern zu einer gefallenen, sündlichen Weltordnung. In den meisten Fällen lehnen die Regenten dieser Welt die Herrschaft Jesu ab, weil sie unter dem Einfluß des "Fürsten dieser Welt" stehen. Deshalb fordert Römer Kap. 13 auch nicht absoluten Gehorsam vom Christen, sondern Widerstandslosigkeit. Wenn die Forderungen Christi und die Befehle Cæsars im Widerspruch stehen, bekennt der Nachfolger Jesu mit den Aposteln: "Man muß Gott mehr gehorchen denn den Menschen."

Jesus lehrt die Unmöglichkeit einer Doppelherrschaft in Matth. 6, 24: "Niemand kann zwei Herren dienen..." Jesu absolute Alleinherrschaft kommt auch in Luk. 14, 33 zum Ausdruck: "...der nicht absagt allem, was er hat, kann nicht mein Jünger sein." In seinem wertvollen Buch, **Jesus der Herr**, bemerkt Karl Heim sehr treffend, daß wenn Jesus wirklich der Herr ist, keine Offenbarung aus der Natur, noch aus dem Alten Testament, bindend oder maßgebend sein kann für den Christen ohne die Autorisierung Jesu. (S. 51). In andern Worten, wir dürfen den Naturwissenschaftler nicht neben Jesus stellen. Jesus ist Herr der Schöpfung. Wir dürfen auch nicht Moses neben Jesus stellen, und dadurch die Herrschaft Jesu beschränken. Moses steht unter Christus; er weist

hin auf die Autorität des kommenden Erlösers: "Einen Propheten wie mich wird der Herr, dein Gott, dir erwecken... dem sollt ihr gehorchen" (5. Mose 18, 15). Bei der Verklärung Jesu wurde diese Verheißung bestätigt durch die Stimme vom Himmel: "Dies ist mein lieber Sohn... den sollt ihr hören" (Matth. 17, 5). Die Anerkennung der absoluten Alleinherrschaft Jesu erlaubt kein doppeltes Bürgertum. Als Untertanen Jesu und Bürger seines Reiches haben wir einen Pilgerstand auf Erden. Als "Fremdlinge" haben wir die Aufgaben eines Botschafters des Himmelreichs, und nicht die Vorrechte eines Weltenbürgers. Nach der Lehre der Schrift ist diese Herrschaft auch

2. Eine all-umfassende Herrschaft.

Die Herrschaft Jesu umspannt Gegenwart und Zukunft. Manche evangelische Theologen verlegen die Herrschaft auf die Zukunft, auf das tausendjährige Reich. Für sie beginnt das Reich Jesu mit der Parusie. Das Neue Testament lehrt jedoch, das Christus der gegenwärtige, erhöhte Herr seines Volkes ist, der sein Reich bereits angefangen hat. Als Herr fordert er heute von seinen Jüngern unbedingten Gehorsam. Wie oft muß er jedoch klagen: "Was heißt ihr mich aber Herr, Herr, und tut nicht was ich euch sage?" (Luk. 6, 46). Er redet heute zu uns durch den Sohn (vgl. Hebr. 1, 2). Der Schreiber des Hebräerbriefes warnt uns vor Auflehnung gegen seine Herrschaft: "Sehet zu, daß ihr den nicht abweist... der vom Himmel redet" (Hebr. 12, 25). Die Zeitform ist zu beachten — er redet in der Gegenwart. Wir müssen stets offen sein für neue Wege unter der Leitung des Herrn.

Die Herrschaft Jesu umspannt auch alle Lebensgebiete. Das innere Leben — Denken, Fühlen, Wollen — soll von Christus und Seinem Wort bestimmt werden. Die Anerkennung des Herrn beginnt im innern Heiligtum (1. Pet. 3, 15). Das äußere Leben, mit all seinen Beziehungen, soll unter dieser Herrschaft stehen (vgl. Kol. 3, 23-24). In seiner letzten Botschaft an die Mennoitische Weltkonferenz blieb der verstorbene H. S. Bender bei dieser Wahrheit im Geiste stehen mit dem Ausruf: Was für eine gewaltige Auffassung der Herrschaft Jesu finden wir doch im Neuen Testament! (vgl. **The Lordship of Christ**, S. 21).

Die Herrschaft Jesu ist letzters auch

3. Eine positive Herrschaft.

In der Geschichte unserer Gemeinschaft merken wir eine allgemeine Neigung, die Herrschaft Jesu vornehmlich in Verboten zu sehen. Christus gab seinen Jüngern jedoch Gebote, nicht Verbote! "Ein neu Gebot gebe ich euch, daß ihr euch untereinander liebet" — gibt uns das Wesen seiner Herrschaft (Joh. 13, 34). Am Abschluß seiner Wirksamkeit haben wir wiederum ein positives Gebot: "Darum gehet hin..." (Matth. 28, 19). Die Erfüllung dieser Gebote soll das Leben des Jüngers hier auf Erden ausfüllen. Die Probleme vieler Christen wären schnell gelöst, wenn sie sich einmal bewußt unter diese Herrschaft Jesu stellen würden.

Wie kann die Herrschaft Jesu in unserem Leben in größerem

Maße verwirklicht werden? Paulus gibt die Antwort in Phil. 2, 10 und 11: Es ist der Weg der gebeugten Knie, es ist der Weg der bekennenden Zunge. Nur der, der in tiefer Beugung sich unter Jesu Herrschaft stellt, wird die innere Kraft besitzen, sich vor keiner weltlichen Größe zu beugen. (vgl. Mardochai, Esther, 3, 2-3). Nur der, der sich im persönlichen Bekenntnis mit Christus und seiner Sache identifiziert, wird erfolgreich sein in der Ausbreitung seiner Herrschaft "zur Ehre Gottes, des Vaters."

Man berichtet, daß es im "Dritten Reich" eine große Begeisterung gab für den Führer jenes Reiches. Das war eine sündliche Begeisterung für einen Herrn der in's Verderben führte. Gott gebe uns eine heilige Begeisterung für Jesus, den Herrn aller Herren — zur Gesundung der Gemeinde und zu einer mehr kraftvollen Ausbreitung seines Reiches. Mit Zinzendorf wollen wir freudig bekennen:

Solange Jesus bleibt der Herr
Wird's alle Tage herrlicher
So war's, so ist's, so wird es sein,
Bei seiner heiligen Gemein.

J. A. Toews

BOOK REVIEW

A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology

by William Horden (MacMillan, 1960, 222 pp.)

"I love flowers, but I hate botany; I love religion, but I hate theology". This, the author contends, is a fairly widespread attitude to theology, and not nearly always without cause; theology has often been dull and pedantic, and sometimes downright unchristian. Even so, he maintains, the answer to poor theology is not no theology, but rather good theology. Horden insists that it is only half true to say that it is much more important what a man does than what a man thinks or believes. It is precisely what he believes that will, to a great extent, determine what he does in a given situation. Further, what he believes concerning a certain issue, will certainly influence his thinking in other related issues. For example, what a man believes concerning Sin will certainly influence his views on the nature of

Salvation, etc. We just cannot escape theological questions (which are in a real sense, ultimate questions) by ignoring them. He warns us that if we attempt this, they will rise up in distorted forms to mock us (p. 3).

But many who would like to become more familiar with theological thinking in our time, find progress difficult, if not impossible, because of the many technical terms which are incomprehensible to them. It is therefore Horden's intention "to introduce the layman to this field of thought in terms that he can understand" (p. 1). He knows that he cannot avoid using technical terms, but when he does use them, he will attempt to define them. The term "layman" in the title refers to any person who does not specialize or work professionally in the field of theology.

Definition of Orthodoxy

Because of the vast differences in the meanings which have been assigned to the word "orthodoxy" in recent years, it might be well for us to define the term as Horden uses it. Without prefix or qualifying adjective, the word "orthodoxy" in Horden's usage refers to "that form of Christianity which won the support of the overwhelming majority of Christians and which is expressed by most of the official proclamations or creeds of Christian groups" (p. 8). As such, he distinguishes it from Fundamentalism, Neo-orthodoxy or Modern Orthodoxy.

Although Horden's chief concern is to set forth contemporary Protestant thinking, his first chapter, entitled "The Growth of Orthodoxy", is a brief sketch of the formative factors and influences active in the growth and development of the credal statements of the Church. He contends that it was always against the threat of heresy and distortion, that the church was driven to make explicit, in doctrinal propositions, what was implicit in Revelation. The author is fairly "orthodox" in his treatment of this topic; and yet one feels led to question the exactness of certain of his statements: e.g. "Modern critical scholarship of the Bible has found that there are many theologies within the New Testament, but it also has found that beneath these variations in theology, there is a common faith" (p. 9). This statement would seem to contradict what he has previously said about the relation of theology to belief.

Threats to Orthodoxy

In chapter 2, Horden deals with those factors which through the last few centuries have chipped away, bit by bit, the foundation stones of orthodoxy. Some of these, he points

out, came from outside the Church, such as humanism, rationalism and more recently, "scientism." Others again arose within the church itself. Especially destructive were the "re-interpretations" of orthodoxy by men like Schleiermacher, Ritsel and Harnack.

In chapters 3 to 9, he takes up, one by one, seven different theological positions or systems which constitute Protestant theological thinking today. In order, they are the following: Fundamentalism, Liberalism, Neo-liberalism, Neo-orthodoxy, American Neo-orthodoxy (especially Niebuhr), the intermediate theology of Paul Tillich, and as he calls it Modern Orthodoxy.

Horden uses the term Fundamentalism in a wider sense than is common today in theologically conservative circles; he does not distinguish between radical fundamentalists and those who prefer to be called "conservative evangelicals" or "Neo-evangelicals." Several times he refers to Carnell, Professor at Fuller's Seminary, as typical of the Fundamentalist position, in spite of the fact that Carnell does not want to be called a "fundamentalist" because of certain negative connotations the term has acquired in recent years. On the whole, however, Horden succeeds in giving an objective and fairly sympathetic presentation of the views held by those who hold to the inerrancy of Scripture, the substitutionary Atonement, the personal return of the Lord, and other doctrines central to this understanding of the Christian faith.

In each of the other views, Horden likewise, attempts an objective presentation. Very seldom does he pause to examine critically any of the views he presents; that is not his purpose. He attempts to catch the central core of the system, the basic method or approach, and seeks

to set this forth in the simplest, most uncomplicated terms possible. He repeatedly confesses that he may distort the picture presented, by such generalization or over simplification, but he seriously attempts to avoid these pitfalls. He also concedes that within each of the classifications which he has made, there are fairly diverse shades of opinion, which frustrate all attempts to make specific demarcations of dividing lines. He deals with representative views and those theologians who are most typical of that theological system.

He deals with Modern Orthodoxy last. In the second last paragraph of this book, he reveals that this is the view that he holds. This will not come as a complete surprise to even the casual reader, if he has been at all alert to the development of the various views. To Hordern, Modern Orthodoxy seems to avoid the fallacies of the other positions mentioned, and conserves all that is best in these systems. In his view, the future belongs to Modern Orthodoxy, although he confesses that it may well be, that because of his bias,

Geschichte der Evangelischen Weltmission

Von Horst R. Flachsmeier (Brunnen Verlag, Giessen und Basel, 1963)

Das Bedürfnis nach einem allumfassenden Werk über die Missionsgeschichte ist wohl von allen Studenten dieses Fachs empfunden worden. Glover's Buch, **The Progress of World-Wide Missions**, hat hierin lange und gut gedient. Es ist aber längst veraltet und nun von Professor J. Herbert Kane revidiert worden. Doch trotz diesem Bemühen hat es nicht nach Wunsch allen Bedürfnissen Genüge getan. Obzwar Glover-Kane's Buch noch manches zu bieten hat, so hegen manche den starken Wunsch einmal von einer an-

the wish is the father of the prediction (p. 215).

The book is well written; the treatment is lucid and concise. Except for a brief bibliography at the end of the book, and an equally brief index, the paraphernalia of scholarship, which often make reading difficult for the layman, are missing. There are no foreign terms or phrases; there are no footnotes. As has been said, his attempt is to be objective. Sometimes this objectivity is carried to extremes. The conservative reader will occasionally be disturbed by Hordern's tendency to speak of certain emphases as salutary or beneficent if they corrected what was really a minor error in Orthodoxy, even if these emphases thereby completely changed the content of those issues. This obtuseness is characteristic of so much of theological thinking in our times. Notwithstanding this, for someone who wants to make an introductory study of contemporary Protestant thinking, this is a good book to read.

H. H. Voth

dem Seite die ganze Geschichte der Mission beleuchtet zu haben. So wird ein jeder Sachkundige es begrüßen, daß nun ein neues Werk erhältlich ist. Es ist auch wertvoll den Sachverhalt einmal von dem mehr europäischen Standpunkt aus zu beschauen, und so greift man begierig nach diesem Buch von Flachsmeier, mit seinen 561 Seiten, und liest es mit Spannung und Dankbarkeit für das, was Gott in dieser Welt hat tun können.

Das Buch liest sich nicht schwer und schildert an Hand vieler bio-

graphischen Bilder den Werdegang der Mission. Die einzelnen Missionare werden mit Recht als die wahren Träger der Mission dargestellt. Es ist wohl zu verstehen, daß bei so einem Bemühen manche Glaubenshelden nicht erwähnt werden, und nicht ins volle Licht gestellt werden.

Nebenbei hat Flachsmeier es auch verstanden unsere Aufmerksamkeit immer wieder auf gewisse Missionsprinzipien zu lenken. Diese sind jedoch nur vorübergehend erwähnt und hätten wohl mehr hervorgehoben werden können. Obzwar es wohl nicht der Zweck dieses Werkes war, so hätte das Buch viel an Wert gewonnen, hätte Flachsmeier diese Prinzipien in einem besonderen Teil zusammengefaßt. Jedoch darf das Werk als Leitfaden für Missionsgeschichte wie auch zum Missionsüberblick (Mission Survey) dienen.

Wenn man die Schilderung Flachsmeiers so verfolgt, kann man nicht anders als in Staunen versetzt zu werden über das, was die einzelnen Glaubenshelden alles geleistet haben. Obzwar das Buch die göttliche Seite der Missionserrungenschaften nicht so betont, so kann man sich des Eindrucks nicht erwehren, daß diese Missionare durch übernatürliche Kraft, den Sieg für die Sache des Herrn errungen haben. Es leuchtet in dieser Geschichte auch öfters hervor, daß "das Blut der Märtyrer zum Samen der Kirche wurde."

Die biographischen Bilder sind nicht nur aus den Reihen der wohlbekanntesten Missionare genommen worden, sondern führen uns auch auf das Wirken mancher, sonst unbekannteren, Kreuzeskämpfer. Fast atemlos liest man von den Erfahrungen, die Johann Martin Fad in Äthiopien machte, wo der unsinnige König die Missionare wiederholt zwang den Folterungen unschuldiger Menschenkinder für die das Herz des Missionaren brannte, beizuwohnen. Dabei

ließ der König es dem Missionar merken, daß seine Familie und er selbst auch noch an die Reihe käme. So lag Fad mit Frau und Kindern im Gefängnis. Doch anstatt zu klagen, haben diese Zeugen Jesu in den Soldaten, an welche sie gekettet waren, ihr Missionsfeld gefunden. Als Fad selbst nach England versandt wurde, wurde seine Familie als Leibbürge gehalten bis er zurück kam. Er kam zurück und litt weiter bis englisches Militär den tyrannischen Herrscher besiegte, und die Missionare freigelassen wurden. Aber auch dann war ihr erster Gedanke nicht die Rückkehr in die Heimat, sondern sie blieben im Lande, um weitere Gelegenheiten zum Zeugen auszunutzen.

Wm. Carey ist wohl allgemein bekannt, und wird als Vater der modernen Missionsbewegung anerkannt. Doch von John Eliot, dem ersten Missionar Neu-Englands unter den Indianern Amerikas, wird nur wenig gesprochen. In diesem Buch wird Eliot, wie auch andere, wie Ziegenbalg und Plütschau, als die würdigen Vorläufer Carey's hervorgehoben.

Von besonderem Wert ist die Anführung der Gründe, die zur Lässigkeit in der Mission geführt haben. Der Rationalismus dämpfte den Missionsgeist. Es gab Vertreter der Meinung, daß die Heiden überhaupt keine Seele hätten, und daß das Evangelium nur ihre Kultur störte. Oder auch, daß die Mission an den Heiden überhaupt nicht Aufgabe der Kirche sei und daß die Bekehrung der Heiden dem souveränen Walten des ewigen Gottes überlassen werden sollte. Diese und andere Argumente werden angeführt, um zu zeigen, wie die Mission ins Stocken kam. Es war unter solchen Verhältnissen, daß Gott Werkzeuge wie Carey, Moffat, Judson, Taylor, Livingstone und andere berief, um das Werk aufs neue zu beleben.

Flachsmeier unterläßt es auch

nicht den Wert medizinischer Missionstätigkeit zu unterstreichen und hebt dann auch den Wert der Literatur hervor, die durch Laubachs Methode zugänglich gemacht wurde.

Ein Teil des Buches ist eine Beschreibung verschiedener Weltkonferenzen, die im Interesse der Mission abgehalten worden sind. Die theologischen Kämpfe, die in Jerusalem (1928), Madras (1938), Amsterdams (1948), Willingen (1952), Evanston (1954), New Delhi (1961) und anderen Plätzen stattfanden, geschildert werden. Dabei kann man sich des Eindrucks jedoch nicht erwehren, daß Flachsmeier es nicht zu streng mit der mehr evangelischen Missionsrichtung hält, sondern mehr von dem Geist der "World Council of Churches" erfaßt worden ist.

Es ist weiter zu begrüßen, daß eine kurze Abhandlung über die verschiedenen nicht christlichen Weltreligionen eingeschlossen ist. Doch wie diese Religionen mit dem Evangelium anzugreifen sind, wird nicht klar ausgeführt.

Der Teil des Buches, der uns die Missionsübersicht gibt, ist mehr allgemein gehalten und erhält nur sei-

nen Wert, wenn dieser Teil mit dem vorhergehenden Inhalt des Buches eng verbunden wird.

Obzwar Flachsmeiers Werk umfangreich ist, kann man es wohl merken, daß es vom europäischen Gesichtspunkt geschrieben worden ist, und auch vielleicht infolge dessen, dem Südamerikanischen Kontinent verhältnismäßig wenig Rücksicht getragen wird. Es liegt ja auf der Hand, daß der Herr hier auch große Taten getan hat, welche von verschiedenen Missionaren große Opfer und Leiden forderten.

Doch schließen wir mit einer positiven Abwertung des großen Bemühens von Flachsmeier. Für deutsche Leser bietet dieses Buch einen unberechenbaren Schatz von Verständnis und Einsicht in die Geschichte der Ausbreitung des Evangeliums. Für die englischsprechende Welt wäre ein ähnliches Werk nur zu begrüßen.

Wer deutsch lesen kann, sollte dieses Buch bestimmt erwerben, um daraus viel Licht zu gewinnen, und um für den öffentlichen Dienst viel brauchbares Material zu finden.

J. J. Toews

Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country*: An Appreciation

In the United States, where it was first published (in 1948), A. Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* had only a small advance sale — some 3300 copies or so. The novel did not receive any book-club notice before its publication and it never reached the top of the bestseller lists. But it did make its way, slowly and steadily. Ordinary yet discerning readers discovered it for themselves, and when they did discover it, they knew instinctively that they had found a thing of rare beauty and truth. And the instinctive reaction of such readers has been confirmed, over and over again, during the years since

then. Indeed, it seems that the consensus of critical opinion now is that we have in Paton's novel what is probably a "minor Christian classic" of our time.

Just what it is about *Cry, the Beloved Country* that accounts for its continuing appeal and increasing significance as a novel of our time is not easy to set down, in any fixed and final manner, but that it actually satisfies most of the basic requirements of good fiction (as outlined in Helen Haines' perceptive book, *Living With Books*, for example) seems clear enough.

We would suggest, in this brief

appreciation of the novel, that *Cry, the Beloved Country* is a significant contemporary novel because, in the first place, it deals directly with one of the crucial problems of our time — a problem, after all, that is not confined to South Africa as to place, nor one confined to the negro and his domination by white overlords as to particular expression, but a problem that faces, and will face, many people throughout the world as the social and scientific revolution of our age grows apace. Someone has ventured the generalization that "the great problem of the latter nineteenth century was the conflict between Christian ethical norms and the economic order, while in the twentieth century the chief problem is the antagonism between Christian principles and race hatreds and prejudices." If this assertion be true — even if true in a limited measure only — it is still of the utmost relevance that Paton chose this particular theme for his novel.

We would suggest, in the second place, that *Cry, the Beloved Country* is a novel of significance because its imaginative representation of this problem of race prejudice and race oppression is both a thoroughly just and thoroughly competent one. It is a just representation in that it consistently avoids the common weaknesses of bitter realism and facile sentimentalism. It is difficult to decide whether Paton's novel is a realistic or romantic one, for it seems to contain the best elements of both of these attitudes to life. There is, for example, an incisive and relentless realism involved in the author's account of the son's unjust condemnation (to death) by the English court in Johannesburg and its paralyzing effects upon the father, Pastor Kumalo. There is, on the other hand, a sublime yet credible idealism involved in the portrayal of the quiet but significant encounter between Pastor Kumalo and Father Vincent

of Johannesburg as a result of which the native pastor is lifted out of his despair, or, again in the representation of the gradual enlightenment and sense of responsibility that come to an indifferent Mr. Jarvis as he reflects upon the life and death of his own son, Arthur.

And *Cry, the Beloved Country* is a thoroughly competent representation in that it pictures forth faithfully not only the literal setting of the story but also the distinctive flavor that surrounds its people and their habits of life. And the style of the novel is itself a thing of artistic beauty and merit. Paton has, for example, successfully captured the simple and quiet dignity of the Zulu language in the terse, telegraphic, and yet taut rhythms of his English phrases (put into the mouths of his rustic characters). White people of Johannesburg, however, are made to speak the more calculated and sophisticated speech which is so familiar to us in the west. Also, Paton has succeeded in combining, into a coherent and vibrant whole, elements as diverse as soliloquies, speeches, meditations, descriptive passages, social reports, and manifestoes of faith.

And *Cry, the Beloved Country*, we suggest finally, is a contemporary novel of significance because its delineation of the ultimate solution to the problem of race prejudice and race strife is an illuminating and, what is more, altogether compelling one. Paton's solution involves the virtues of humility, compassion, and forgiveness as these are experienced and expressed within the context of God's redemptive grace. Horton Davies reminds us of the importance of this qualifying context when he remarks that "Paton's living faith in the crucified and risen Lord gives him balance; it makes him chary of purely humanistic utopias, while it delivers him from the despair of social

(Continued on page 4)